

took a meal together there. "The ceremony had no ecclesiastical character. . . . The blessings only gave publicity to the ceremony. They were not priestly blessings and were not essential to the validity of the marriage." <sup>1</sup> So we see that, even amongst a people so attached to tradition as the Jews, when one of the folkways did not satisfy an interest, or outraged taste, the mores modified it into a form which could give satisfaction.

418. Marriage in the New Testament. According to the New Testament marriage is a compromise between indulgence and renunciation of sex passion. A compromise is always irrational when it bears upon concepts of right and truth, and not on mere expediency of action. The concept of right and truth on either hand may be correct; it is certain that the compromise between them is not correct. The compromise can be maintained only by disregarding its antagonism to the concepts on each side of it. For fifteen hundred years the Christian church fluttered, as in a moral net, in the inconsistencies of the current view of marriage. The procreation of children was recognized as the holiest function and the greatest responsibility of human beings, but it was considered to involve descent into sensuality and degradation. It was the highest right and the deepest wrong to satisfy the sex passion, and the two aspects were reconciled partially in marriage, by a network of intricate moral dogmas which must be inculcated by long and painful education. In the sixteenth century the problem was solved by repudiating the doctrine of celibacy as a meritorious and superior state, and making marriage a rational and institutional regulation of the sex relation, in which the aim is to repress what is harmful, and develop what is

beneficial, to  
human welfare. This change was produced by  
and out of the  
mores. The Protestants denounced the falsehood  
and vice under  
the pretended respect for celibacy. The new  
view of marriage  
could not be at once fully invented and  
introduced. Therefore  
the Romanists pointed with scorn to the careless  
marriage and  
loose divorce amongst the Protestants (sec. 380).  
419. Merit of celibacy. No reasons are  
ascertainable why Paul  
should maintain that celibacy is to be preferred to  
wedlock as a

<sup>1</sup> Freisen, *Gesch. des kanon. Eherechts* 23, 47, 92-96.